



The Ads are Here! Planning for Black Friday and Cyber Monday

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MADISON – Shoppers rejoice! Thanksgiving is near, and with it comes Black Friday and Cyber Monday (and a pile of sales flyers). Over the past few years, these one-day extravaganzas have morphed into a nearly week-long discount blitz. The great deals found during these sales tend to have event-specific terms and limitations that vary across retailers, so the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) reminds shoppers to pay close attention to the fine print in newspaper and online ads before shopping.

“Retailers’ hours of business, item quantities, and return policies can all be different from normal operation and have additional constraints during holiday shopping special events,” said Frank Frassetto, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. “Store ads are already hitting mail boxes, email inboxes and newspapers, so start your shopping preparation now by taking a close look at the terms and conditions on the sales flyers. Some discounts are only offered online or in the store.”

Wisconsin law requires stores to charge their lowest advertised price for a product and to refund any overcharge, so it is important for consumers to keep an eye on the prices at the register or in the online shopping cart. Special pricing may only apply to specific products, so be sure that you have the correct item and model name or number before you start to checkout. Review your receipts to make certain that you were charged the advertised price.

Other simple tips to remember when you are shopping for deals this holiday season include:

- Keep the store ad in hand while you shop and take notes of any special prices or sale signage.
- Make sure you understand return/refund/exchange policies before you buy. Retailers may have stricter policies in place for Black Friday and Cyber Monday purchases, and online purchases may not necessarily be eligible for in-store returns. Keep your receipts.
- Remember to pick up or print off a gift receipt. Be aware that clearance and “open items” may have different return policies or not be returnable at all.
- As the items run through the register, keep an eye on the display and speak up if you believe that an item did not register at its advertised price.

If you are charged the wrong price on an item and the business will not correct the error, file a complaint with DATCP’s Weights and Measures Bureau, visit datcp.wi.gov, send an e-mail to datcpweightsandmeasures@wi.gov or call 608-224-4942.

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